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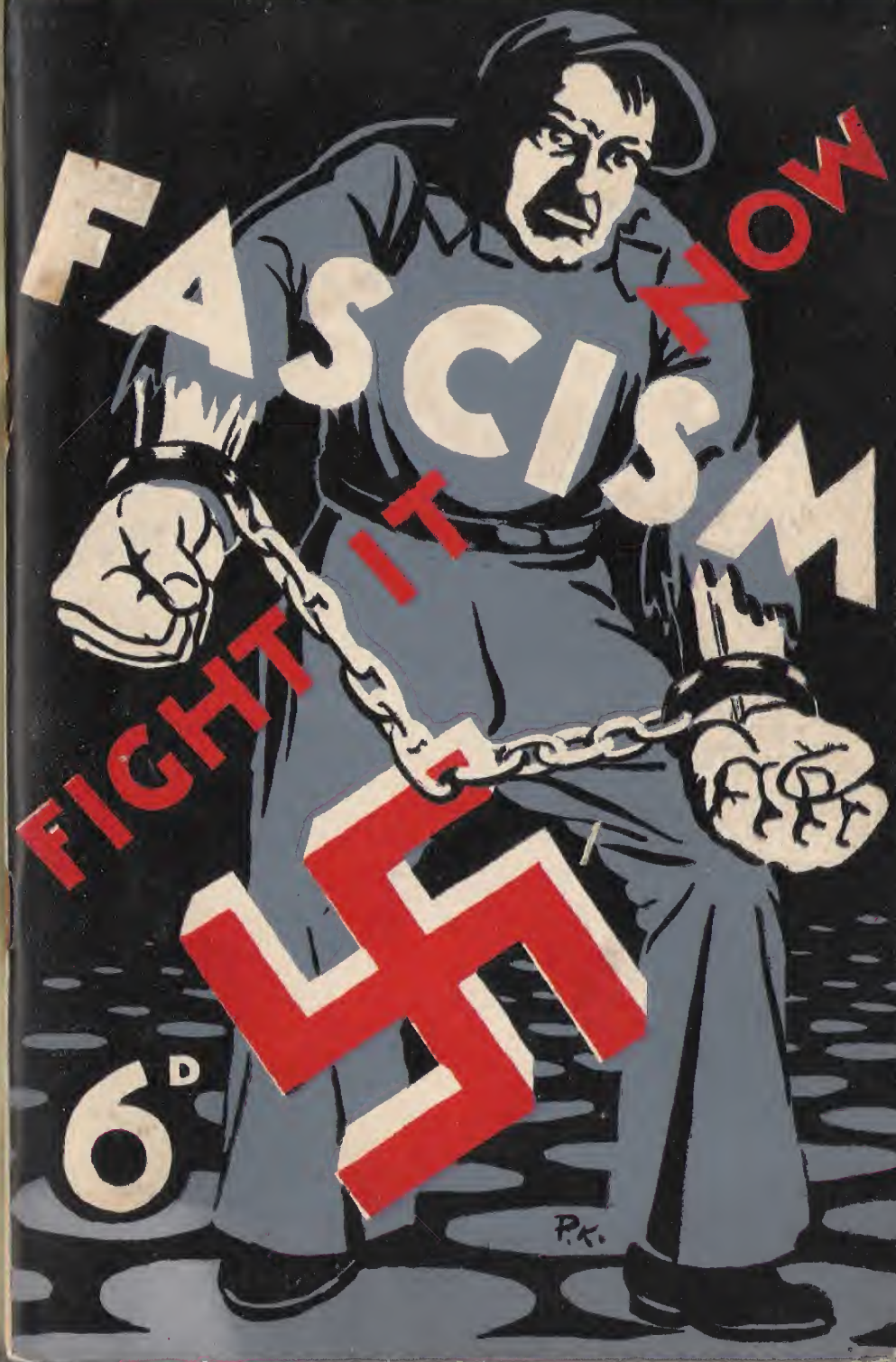


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REFERENCES

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FASCISM—*Fight it Now*

Foreword by

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January, 1937

Prepared for the

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FOREWORD

A BRITISH historian has stated that the nineteenth century ended with the outbreak of War in 1914. That was a century in which human ingenuity excelled, and the coming of the big industries made possible for the human family, living and working conditions which were beyond the reach of previous generations.

It was a century, too, in which the working class attained to a new dignity as a result of collective efforts through trade unions, co-operative societies, friendly societies, and by means of political action. The brutality which accompanied the mechanisation of industry, with its unbridled exploitation of the workers—old and young—gave rise to the movements which have now become accepted facts in our national life.

The individual worker was the simple victim of his employer : but with organisation and collective action the process of humanising working and living conditions became successful, and untold benefits accrued to the working class. It is not possible here to dwell upon the achievements of trade unionism, co-operation, and political action ; it is sufficient to state that as a result of these efforts the worker reaped the reward of his increased bargaining power, and won the full rights of citizenship for himself and his class.

The "Foreword" to a pamphlet which deals with the effects of fascist domination is a fitting place to draw attention to these facts. The pamphlet, we hope, will be read widely by those who have attained to manhood and womanhood since 1914. IT IS NO CONDEMNATION OF THESE MEN AND WOMEN TO STATE THAT THEY HAVE YET TO MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE MARCH TOWARDS FREEDOM AND EMANCIPATION OF THE WORKING CLASS. The great battles were won before their day, and their young lives have been overshadowed by the Great War and its terrible aftermath.

Yet they must be made to realise that the better conditions they enjoy were obtained as a result of action in a State with a democratic form of government, by trade unions, and other organisations which are not permitted to function in fascist countries.

It will not be denied that the triumphs of fascism here as elsewhere would result in the scrapping of that great political and social structure upon which rests the material well-being and spiritual freedom of our people. It would mean a new inquisition where the persecuted and oppressed would be those who, by word and deed, sought to make available for all, such standards as are possible by intelligent action in an enlightened community.

This pamphlet gives us a straightforward picture of fascism in action in a neighbouring country—a picture of unspeakable cruelty and oppression. It has for each one of us a warning and a message. FASCISM MEANS THE SUPPRESSION OF ALL DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS.

We have our lives to live and we can, if we choose, preserve ourselves from the evils which have befallen the workers in Germany and Italy. They have lost the right to live their own lives, and are no more than pawns in the adventures of a decadent capitalism. We can avoid a similar fate if we will but learn now that fascism is the enemy of the working class : it seeks to enslave us and our children.

Whether as citizens or as workers the people of this country have been able to bring about progressive increases in their standards of living. There is every reason to believe that with organisation and planning, the future is full of hope for still greater improvements in the living conditions of the human family ; but this progress is possible only if we retain our right to think and our freedom to act.

The instruments of working-class endeavour are the trade unions, the Labour Party, and the co-operative movement. They are the protection of the working class against oppression, and they are our only insurance against fascism, nazi-ism, and kindred terrors.

This pamphlet does more than lay bare the consequences of fascism. It gives fair warning that a triumphant fascism in this country would destroy our democratic institutions, deprive us of our freedom, and reduce our standards of living. It would, at the same time, so fetter the great mass of the people that the restoration of democratic institutions would be possible only by action involving a sea of blood.

This freedom that we enjoy ; these creative opportunities which are ours ; this democracy in which we share—they are our heritage, and we are their custodians. Throughout the last century each succeeding generation has made its contribution to raising human standards and human values. WE REFUSE TO BELIEVE THAT THE PEOPLE OF THESE ISLANDS WILL ALLOW IT ALL TO BE BURIED IN A FASCIST GRAVEYARD.

Rather, they will go forward, determined at all costs to make their free and democratic institutions more and more responsive to their will.

It is to such men and women that the Labour Movement makes its appeal.

JOHN MARCHBANK,
J. C. LITTLE.

January 7th, 1937.

FASCISM—FIGHT IT NOW

THIS pamphlet has been written specially for you, as one of several million people who should be urgently concerned with its contents. We assume that you are a trade unionist, or the wife, son or daughter of a trade unionist, or perhaps someone who is contemplating joining a trade union in the very near future. If you come within any of these definitions what we have to say in the following pages is very much your business. It is a matter of your bread and butter, and a matter even of life and death, as we think you will agree when you have finished this booklet.

In Great Britain there are over $3\frac{1}{2}$ million members of trade unions which are affiliated to the Trades Union Congress, and several thousand more belonging to unions—such as the National Union of Journalists—which are not affiliated but which nevertheless are *bona fide* trade unions.

We may add to this figure the members of the families of trade unionists—who share many of the advantages which trade unionism has brought to the wage-earner—and we have a figure which may run into something between seven and eight million—a very considerable section of the people of Great Britain, you will agree. Now our purpose in these pages is to expose a plot—a plot which is aimed at your safety and your comfort, and also at your liberties. We shall show how this plot would harm you—if you let the conspirators succeed in pulling it off—by using the example of another country where the plotters have been successful.

That country is Germany. The German trade union movement was even larger than the British—it had over eight million members in 1930. Now there is no trade union movement in Germany—this whole vast movement has been wiped out, and the effect of this upon the workers has been appalling.

Nothing can be more foolish than to say, "Oh, they can never do here what they did in Germany—this is a different kind of country." That is exactly what thousands of German

trade unionists said in the earlier days of German fascism. "They can never do here what they did in Italy," said these German men and women of the working class. And then—it became too late; and now their unions have vanished. Let us learn a lesson from that sad and dreadful example, and see that this information reaches our fellow trade unionists, so that we may be on our guard, and remove the evil before it grows.

Before the Nazis smashed it, the German trade union movement was the largest in the world, with the exception of the Russian unions. We don't intend to use a lot of figures in these pages, for too many figures make dry reading, but we must ask you to consider a few which will reveal the vast extent of German trade unionism.

GREAT UNION MOVEMENT

In 1930, for example, it was reckoned that there were over eight million trade unionists in Germany. Of these, the "Free Trade Union"—similar to our Trades Union Congress—numbered $5\frac{1}{2}$ million members. Then there were nearly 2 million trade unionists belonging to non-affiliated unions—many of these were "black-coated" unions, or organisations of office or professional workers. And another $1\frac{1}{4}$ million workers belonged to the Christian Trade Unions. These last existed in the Catholic districts of Germany and were looked upon as organisations which were much "milder," more "conservative," than the ordinary unions. In spite of their "mildness," however, the Christian Trade Unions were broken up and dissolved by the Nazis, just as arbitrarily and brutally as were the other unions. The fascists, being the servants of the big industrial employers, were out to smash anything which had the faintest flavour of trade unionism, and the $1\frac{1}{4}$ million Christian trade unionists saw their organisations broken up just as ruthlessly as were the two or three small unions—with only 25,000 members—of the Syndicalists, who were considered as anarchists and "ultra-Red." So we see that, whatever the political attitude of a trade union—whether Socialist, non-party, Catholic, Conservative or Syndicalist—the fascists are out to destroy it if it bears the least trace of INDEPENDENT WORKING-CLASS EFFORT TO INFLUENCE WAGES, HOURS AND WORKING CONDITIONS.

We can see how strongly organised were the German workers—strong in numbers, at least, if not, unfortunately, strong in

knowledge of what fascism intended to do to them—when we look at a few figures of the various individual unions.

There were, for instance, 243,611 German railwaymen in the German equivalent of the National Union of Railwaymen, in January 1932, besides 5,000 engineers and firemen who had their own separate union. The total of organised building workers was 458,048—nearly half a million! Engineering and iron and steel workers in trade unions made up the huge figure of 944,310—getting very near the million mark. Organised miners amounted to 198,358—the German mining industry is not as large as ours. And the huge figure of 390,360 represented the membership of the German Transport Workers' Union.

These figures should be sufficient to convince us of the magnitude of the German trade union movement. A magnificent movement, and built up through many years hard work, effort and self-sacrifice. In May, 1933, the fascists seized it in order to smash it.

Now it exists no more—except secretly in the hearts of many thousands of German workers who are still loyal to their unions, although they may not publicly express this loyalty; and who live and work only for the day when they may once again freely and openly rebuild that mighty movement of which they have been deprived. And next time they build it, they will take care to make it forever proof against the cunning conspiracies and repulsive violence of the fascists. But that time may not come for years; and, in any event, they will have the whole job of building their organisations all over again. Shall we not be wiser in learning from their terrible experience, by determining that our unions shall never be broken as were the German ones, by getting together NOW and acting, every one of us, as vigilant watch-dogs to guard our organisations against the wreckers?

After the Nazis had seized power, they proceeded to destroy the German trade union movement. Everywhere, brown-shirted bands of fascists entered the headquarters of the trade unions, seized the furniture, typewriters and cash. The machinery, presses, etc., of the labour papers were smashed up. The funds of the unions—amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds—were confiscated. Some leaders were killed, often after the most revoltingly brutal torture, and others were thrown into prison or condemned to the living death of the concentration camps, those hells of misery in which thousands

of decent, reliable, honourable trade union officials—organisers, secretaries, chairmen, paid or unpaid—are now eating their hearts out.

These men and women—people like the district or branch officials of your own union, for instance—were not punished for any specific offence—they had violated no laws, they had committed no crime. Their only offence was that they had honestly and conscientiously sought to represent the interests of their fellow trade unionists, to maintain existing standards of wages and conditions and to better them. They were not “Reds,” for the most part, but just plain ordinary trade unionists. But they represented the point of view of the workers, and that, in the eyes of the fascists—who are the obedient flunkies of the employers—is sufficient crime.

THE FACTORY COUNCILS

A highly important factor in German working-class life, before the Nazis destroyed them, were the *Betriebsräte*, or FACTORY COUNCILS. The German Republic, by a law passed in 1920, established and recognised these factory councils, which were set up in factories, offices, works, on the railways—in fact, in all industrial concerns. These councils were elected annually by the workers by a FREE AND SECRET BALLOT.

The number of members elected to the factory councils was based upon the number of workers in any given concern. Each year, before election, a list of candidates for election was presented to the workers and they were able to select those candidates they considered most suitable to represent their interests. Usually, the trade unions would put up the names of men who were recognised as reliable trade union members, and, in most cases, these were elected. At any rate, the workers in the factory had the final decision by means of their voting.

We see that this system was similar to the WORKERS' COMMITTEES or SHOP STEWARDS' COMMITTEES which have existed at various periods in some British concerns, but that, in Germany, the system was universal, was greatly developed and extended, and was recognised in the law of the country.

These workers' councils met independently—no employers ever attended their meetings. The councils exercised a certain

amount of control over working conditions, the maintenance of the health of the workers, safety from accident and disablement, and so on ; and also saw to it that there were no breaches by the employer of the agreements with the trade unions regarding wages, hours, overtime, etc.

FACTORY COUNCILS ABOLISHED

Thus we see that, under the Republic, when the trade unions existed, certain machinery had been set up to protect the interests of the workers. The wage-earner did not feel that his wages, hours and working conditions could be changed at any time, at the whim of the employer. He felt that he was, to some extent, safeguarded, both by his trade union, on a national scale, and by his factory council in the actual place of work.

This is the function of trade unionism—to establish, through combined action, decent conditions for the workers, and to preserve those conditions against any attempts to lower them. Not, of course, merely to be content with past gains, but to work towards an ever improving standard for the workers. They deserve it, for, in the last analysis, it is the workers who, by their own labour, produce everything which is of use in life, everything which is necessary to the well-being of the community. Although they produce everything, they get individually the smallest share of what they produce. The trade unions exist to help them get a larger share, and to produce under healthy, safe and decent conditions.

But now all this is changed in the fascist countries. That widely extended system of workers' councils in Germany, which we have just described, exists no more. In its place is a system which is unworthy of the term—a mockery of the old councils which the fascists abolished. The German workers now have no protection—they are at the mercy of the employers. Their trade unions have gone, and in their place they have the *Arbeitsfront*, the Labour Front, which we shall shortly examine. Their factory councils have gone, and in their place, the Nazis have set up the *Vertrauensräte* or "Confidence Councils."¹*

NEW COUNCILS A FAKE

Why did the Nazis bother even to have these "Confidence Councils", you may ask. The answer lies in the magnitude of

* The numbers refer to sources of information, a list of which will be found on page 2 of cover.

the trade union movement in Germany and the loyalty it evoked among millions of workers. The factory councils, as one expression of this, were greatly valued by the workers. Well, the Nazis were intelligent enough to realise that factories are not much good unless you have workers to staff them. They preferred therefore to use a certain amount of trickery, which might work among the more backward, in addition to their customary brutality ; and so they took away the workers' factory councils and gave the workers, in their place, this shabby imitation, the Confidence Council. They took away the bread and substituted a stone.

Purely upon the surface, the present councils bear a faint resemblance to the former factory councils. The word "council" is still employed—this deception represents a high peak of fascist strategy. But the retention of the word is just about all. The present councils do not only deprive the workers of free expression, they are actually employed to further the designs of the employers.

Let us consider the difference between the old workers' councils, and the fascist substitute councils. First, the voting, the election of representatives. The lists of candidates to the old councils were drawn up and presented by the trade unions. The employer was not consulted. He put forward no candidates of his own—no "pets of the boss" ever appeared on the list. But, for the present councils, the candidates are not put forward by the unions, for the excellent reason that there are no unions. Nor are they put forward by the workers in the factories. The list of candidates is drawn up by two people, THE EMPLOYER and THE NAZI LOCAL LABOUR CHIEF, a specially trusted member of the fascist party.

It should be obvious to anybody that a "council" of workers elected from a list which is hand-picked by the employer and a fascist party lieutenant, cannot possibly represent the interests of the workers. In his consultations with the local "labour chief" the employer, quite naturally, puts up the names of workers who are agreeable to himself—precisely those "boss's pets" who could never get on to the old councils.

Now you have noted that the former factory councils functioned quite independently of the employer—he had no voice in their discussions, nor was he present at their meetings. Not so in the case of these "Confidence Councils" which have

emanated from the fertile brains of the fascists. For, note the following: THE EMPLOYER IS ALSO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE "CONFIDENCE COUNCIL"! Imagine—the employer as chairman of a "workers' " council! The lion lying down with the lamb—with the usual result that, very shortly, the lamb is inside the lion! Now we are beginning to get at the real reason why the Nazis called these bodies "Confidence" councils—it was an unconscious admission that they were playing a clumsy *confidence trick* on the workers.

So the employer is chairman of the council. It is he who convenes the meetings, leads the discussions, and so on. "Leads" the discussion is right! For, in fascist Germany, the employer is termed the "leader" of the factory—he is a miniature Hitler within his own miniature kingdom. And in one sense, perhaps, he is a leader—he leads the workers up the garden, and over into the ditch of exploitation and poverty. Or, rather, he WANTS to lead them—for there are hundreds of thousands of German workers who see through this confidence trick, although Nazi tyranny prevents open exposure of it.

One more point of difference between the old and the new councils. The old councils had the power to make independent decisions. They could take up individual cases of workers, with regard to wages, hours, unjust dismissals, and so on. And they had the power of the unions behind them to enforce their decisions, if it came to a fight. But the brand-new councils which the fascists have presented to the workers have no such power. They are merely "advisory bodies"—which means they can talk, but cannot enforce any conclusions they may arrive at. And even the range of their discussion has been severely limited. Practically all they can do is to discuss routine affairs—the hour when work should begin and end, meal-time breaks, the imposition of fines, and so on. And don't forget that, even in these matters—with the employer in the chair and the majority of the members his "yes-men"—their decisions are unlikely to cause the employer any loss of sleep at night. Some of the council members are even spies of the fascist secret police, placed on the council in order to report on any member who dares voice any grievance of the workers.

What has been the result of this perversion by the Nazis of the conception of the factory councils? In the first elections held for the Confidence Councils, in 1934, the workers were asked to vote for or against the list of candidates, as a whole,

without any power of choice or discrimination, even among the candidates who had been put up. This resulted in a crushing defeat of the fascists, for the workers—although they had no alternative candidates—just voted overwhelmingly against the lists in their entirety.

Trusting to avoid a similar fiasco in 1935—for the voting in 1934 had revealed to the world the widespread detestation, among German workers, of Nazi rule—the fascists did not insist, in the 1935 elections, that the workers vote for or against the lists in their entirety, but permitted voting for individual candidates—but of course, only for candidates in the list drawn up in consultation with the employers, as before. As they had this time included a few names of candidates who enjoyed a certain measure of confidence among the workers, the voting was consequently not so obviously hostile as in 1934, but nevertheless on the whole it was strongly against the lists. In 1936, the elections were "postponed"—in other words, they did not take place at all. The fascist use of the word "postponed", in this connection, reminds us of the tramp who said, "I never miss a meal, I only postpone one."

Most people in Germany are of the opinion that there will be no more elections to the Nazi factory councils. They have played their part in letting the workers down gradually, it is thought; and now even this shabby pretence at consulting the workers about their working conditions may be abandoned.

THE "LABOUR FRONT"

Now let us look at the Labour Front (*Arbeitsfront*)² which is supposed to be the fascist substitute for the trade union movement they have destroyed.

This organisation has no similarity whatever with any of the previous organisations of the workers. It is officially connected with the fascist government and with the fascist party; It exerts no efforts to improve the lot of the workers. The workers have no control over it. After the trade unions were broken, their ample funds, which had been stolen, were paid over, in part, into the coffers of this dummy organisation.

And the German trade unions were also "taken over" by the Labour Front. This means that, after their headquarters and funds had been seized, and many leaders and officials killed or imprisoned, the membership of the former trade unions was

automatically transferred to the Labour Front, whether they liked it or not. In other words, every former trade unionist is compelled to continue paying his contributions—but he pays them to the Labour Front.

The objects of the Labour Front, it is announced, are “educational.” It has abandoned all attempts at interfering in the relations of the workers with their employers, in the sense of defending the workers’ interests. In the early days of German fascism, there were a few working-class people, unemployed and others, who really thought that National-Socialism—the Hitler party calls itself the National-Socialist Party—was something more than a name by means of which the fascists sought to win over some of the less intelligent workers. These young fascists were sincere—although very muddled—and did not at first realise that they had been the dupes of the unscrupulous political careerists, financed by the capitalists and banks. Among the British fascists one may also sometimes find young men and women who are equally sincere and idealistic, and equally shortsighted. Well, these young Nazis—workers, unemployed, or clerks, for the most part—were soon undeceived. It became evident that the main object of the Labour Front was to provide “eye-wash” for the workers while the bosses picked their pockets, and also to provide hundreds of well-paid jobs as officials (with very little to do) for the minor bosses of the Nazi Party.

LABOUR “FRONT” STABS WORKERS IN BACK

The shock came for these young earnest believers in the promises which Hitler had made before he gained power, when their Leader announced, in July 1933, “The revolution is ended. I shall deal ruthlessly with any so-called second revolution.” This was a rap on the knuckles for that earnest, if simple, element among the Nazis who thought some protection for German labour might be secured under fascism. Soon these young people found themselves kicked out of their jobs, expelled from the fascist organisations—except for a few who were bribed with official jobs. And that was the end of any attempt to make the Labour Front live up to its name.

So that there might be no misconceptions regarding the functions of the Labour Front, Dr. Ley, its chief, stated, in 1933, in an article in *Der Deutsche*, official organ of the Labour

Front, “it has always been clear that the trade unionist conception must be eradicated.” In the same article, he proceeded to state, “I have succeeded in the last six months in rooting out from the organisation this trade unionist mode of thought.” Thus the supreme leader of the Labour Front himself admits that this body fulfils none of the functions of a trade union.

You may want to know what it does do, then? Well, its main activity is the issuing of Nazi propaganda, besides which it aims at organising certain sports and leisure activities—with sports grounds and apparatus confiscated, without compensation, from the former labour sports organisations—for working people. Here are the names of some of the “departments” of the Labour Front: Strength Through Joy Department; Beauty of Labour Department; Patriotism Department; Travel, Rambling and Holiday Department; Self-Help and Allotments Department; Propaganda Department; and so on.

Even under the Hitler terror, with spies everywhere among the workers, and with starvation at every worker’s elbow, the unconquerable humour of the working class emerges frequently at the expense of the Labour Front. Jest, whispered from man to man, run the rounds of factories, and often they are related to the various Labour Front departments, whose names are expressive of the Nazi habit of giving grand titles to things which have no substance. “The Patriotism Department tells us to love our Fatherland but all we own of it now is what we have under our finger-nails,” a worker will say. And, as for the Travel Department, one worker will tell another, “My wife gets all the travelling she can stand now, going around all day trying to get a quarter-pound of margarine.”

But this Labour Front is enormously rich, because membership is virtually compulsory. In December 1935, Dr. Ley said: “We hope and believe that no one will find work in Germany who is not a member of the Labour Front”³ and a German court has held that an employer is within his rights in dismissing a worker who refuses to join the Labour Front.⁴ Furthermore as the Labour Front includes in its membership shopkeepers, professional men and EMPLOYERS, as well as workers, it has over 18 million members.

Every one of these members pays his contributions to the Labour Front. And what is done with all this money? There is no insurance to pay out of the Labour Front funds—when the fascists smashed the trade unions they abolished their sickness

and death benefits and other insurance schemes, although they didn't return the money which thousands of workers had contributed for years.* Some of the Labour Front money goes in propaganda, quite a lot is used to maintain a horde of idle officials, but the bulk of it is turned over to the fascist state to pay for armaments. It is really a thinly disguised form of compulsory extra taxation.

We have just said that EMPLOYERS also belong to the Labour Front. This should destroy the last plea of the fascist propagandist that the Labour Front performs any function at all comparable with that of a trade union. Remember *that* when the British Fascist speaker shouts, "We stand for 100 per cent. trade unionism!" Perhaps they do—on the Labour Front pattern. The German fascists have also made membership in the Labour Front practically 100 per cent., but it's a funny kind of trade unionism!

EMPLOYERS RULE LABOUR FRONT

Not only workers belong to the Labour Front, then, but also employers, company directors, managers, superintendents, and so on. The employers' organisation, the Organisation of Industrial Concerns—more or less like our Federation of British Industries—has become AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE LABOUR FRONT. You can get some idea of how things are if you imagine the Federation of British Industries, or any other employers' organisation, being allowed to affiliate with the Trades Union Congress! Capitalists are members of the Labour Front. In Great Britain this would mean, for example, that the directors of our railway companies would become members of the executive committee of the National Union of Railwaymen! Or that wealthy mine-owners would sit in high places with voice and vote at the conferences of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain. Some chance for the workers to obtain any betterment of their conditions, under such circumstances! But that is what the British Fascists mean when they talk about 100 per cent. trade unionism—that's their kind of trade unionism, the kind which kow-tows to the employer and hands him the keys of the office—and of the treasury!

For, not only are the big employers MEMBERS of the Labour

* There was always a double insurance scheme in Germany, one run by the State and the other by the trade unions. Now, only the state scheme is left.

Front, they are its LEADERS. In the Leipzig Agreement—an official document drawn up and issued in the spring of 1935, defining the nature and status of the Labour Front—it states definitely that "either the chairman or vice-chairman of ALL district or special branches of the Labour Front must be an industrialist." An industrialist—a capitalist. And if one of these two—chairman or vice-chairman—is not an employer, then he must be a member of the Fascist Party appointed by Labour Front headquarters. Some chance for the membership!

Incidentally, although the German fascists destroyed the workers' organisations, the trade unions, they did not apply the same methods to the EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS. While the workers in fascist Germany are now nakedly exposed to attacks upon their wages, hours and conditions, with no organisation of their own to protect them, the Employers have their strong Organisation of Industrial Concerns. This organisation, unlike the unions, has preserved intact its funds from pre-Nazi days. The fascists—despite their big talk BEFORE they came to power—did not dare lay a finger on the funds or organisations of the big capitalists. And for very good reason: it was the secret money gifts of these big capitalists which helped the fascists to trick and terrorise their way to power. It is true that they made a bluff at "dissolving" the organisation of the German employers, in the earlier days of fascism—when they still needed to fool those of their own followers who had been duped into a belief in their "socialist" promises. They "dissolved" it one day—without touching its funds—and it reappeared the next day, under another name, and is still going strong!

We can see, then, what the fascists have done for the workers in Germany. They have destroyed the workers' organisations, the trade unions, leaving the workers defenceless; while the employers are still strongly organised in a representative, active body. Thus the fascists have turned over the workers, unprotected and gagged, to the mercies of the employers. They have done a job for the employers, they have acted as strike-breakers on a national scale. They have been the betrayers of the common people, delivering them to their exploiters.

And behind the employers stands the fascist State, with its new laws, its own courts, police, secret police, storm-troopers, concentration camps. In fascist Germany, as in fascist Italy, the workers have been robbed of the right to strike, of the right

to withhold their labour in common. It is illegal—a crime—to strike in Germany or Italy, or to “incite” others to strike. If workers endeavour to express, in an organised manner, any protest against evil conditions, they can be transported to a concentration camp, there to remain for years.

BOUND TO THE BOSS

Fascist law binds the worker to the employer, just as the serf of the soil, in feudal days, was bound to serve his lord. The mill-owner, factory-owner, mine-owner, multiple shop proprietor, or other employer is given sole power within his concern. In proof of this, we refer you to the “Law to Regulate National Labour” (*Gesetz zur Ordnung der nationalen Arbeit*) of January 20th, 1934. Paragraph two of this law states that the man who ALONE has the right to make decisions in any concern is the EMPLOYER. He is called “the Leader (*Führer*) of his factory.” The workers are his “followers.”

And, supposing you, as a German worker, don't like the way the “leader” of your factory runs things, and you want to find a job elsewhere—do you think you can do it? It's not too easy. Here again we see a reversion to the practices of the Middle Ages, when the serf was not allowed to leave the service of the feudal lord. All through the laws governing labour in fascist Germany runs this increasing element of RESTRICTION OF FREEDOM TO MOVE ABOUT. Agricultural labourers are prevented from coming to work in the towns, and town workers from going to the country. There exists a system of compulsory labour on the land. But principally the workers' freedom of movement is limited by the introduction of the Workers' Passport (*Arbeitsbuch*). This passport must be held by all workers earning less than 8,000 marks (about £650) per year. Obviously only highly paid administrative posts in industry would receive salaries above this figure. Fascist Party officials, naturally, are exempt from this provision, as are government officials. The police have the right to inspect these passports at any time. Unsatisfactory entries in the book, made by the employer—and particularly if referring to the man's political opinions, or showing that he has been a “discontented” worker—practically debar him from obtaining employment. So, if he already has a job, however poor the conditions, he cannot risk leaving it.

We have seen that the fascists or Nazis in Germany have deprived the workers of any possibility of open, independent action. Their unions have been destroyed as well as the working-class press. All political parties, except the Nazi, or fascist, Party, have been forbidden. Thousands of working-class leaders and active trade unionists are in prison or concentration camps. Many have been killed for no reason except that they were active on behalf of the working class. The workers are forbidden to organise and even to express in words their discontent. Their factory councils have been abolished. Except for the courage which still flames in their hearts, their secret will to achieve freedom, and their heroic “underground” resistance, they are defenceless.

THE NAZI “PARADISE”

Now, why all this? Why have the fascists stripped the workers of their defence? Not for fun, nor out of sheer devilment. They had a very good reason, a reason which is as clear as daylight. THE WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS AND PRESS STOOD BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND THE EMPLOYERS, THEY WERE A WALL OF DEFENCE AGAINST WAGE-CUTS, LONGER HOURS, HARSHER WORKING RULES, WORSE CONDITIONS GENERALLY. So, said the employers, they had to go. And the employers hired the fascists to do the dirty work for them.

How stand the workers of Germany to-day, under the rule of fascism? Are they enjoying the paradise which Hitler and his lieutenants promised them? Let us see.

Mind you, it's not too easy to discover the truth. That is, we know the facts in a general way—it should be impossible to conceal from the world the condition of millions of people. We know the German people are suffering. But the Nazis maintain a continual barrage of propaganda the main purpose of which is to camouflage the facts. And all the figures at our disposal come from OFFICIAL FASCIST SOURCES.

WAGES—REAL & UNREAL

Now, the German fascists claim that they have kept wages stable, since they have come to power—that wages have not fallen. Even with their power to doctor figures, the Nazis have not the face to claim that wages HAVE RISEN. But have they even remained on the pre-fascist level?

First, let us distinguish between *real wages* and nominal, or money, wages. We reckon real wages in accordance with their purchasing power. If, for the same amount of wages as you received last week, you can only buy half what you bought last week—because prices have gone up—your wages have really been cut in half. If you don't believe that, ask the wife who has to do the buying for the family.

And again, if certain deductions are made compulsorily from your wages, at your place of work—deductions about which you have not been consulted—then this amounts to a wage reduction in actual fact, although nominally you will be receiving the same sum. But you don't have it all to spend—and we think you'll agree that makes quite a difference!

It is a well-known fact that the fascists in Germany have been rearming on a large scale. Hitler and his pals are out for war—that may be gathered by any person who reads his daily newspaper. And, in order to make war, they are increasing their armaments at break-neck speed. This means that more workers have been employed in the armaments and munitions industry. And it is in connection with the arms industry that the few slight increases in wages have occurred. Not even in the whole arms industry by any means, but in one or two branches only. But we are looking into the wages of ALL the German workers, not just one section in one industry. We want to know whether wages AS A WHOLE have improved, remained stationary or declined. And we want to know something about prices—what those wages can buy.

The Nazis boast, as we have seen, that they have kept wages stable. We can show, however, that the only stable factor is the MONEY WAGE, and even that *has declined recently in some industries*. Both the cost of living and compulsory and semi-compulsory deductions from wages, introduced by the Nazis, have substantially reduced REAL WAGES.

Let us look however, at the REDUCTIONS IN MONEY WAGES which have taken place under Nazi rule. Between 1929 and 1932 wages had been drastically reduced. But even so (using only Nazi figures) in the iron industry, the chemical industry and the building industry there have been slight reductions in money wages since 1935. Iron-workers' hourly wages were 92 pfennigs in 1935 and they fell to 91.3 in 1936. The 1935 average hourly wage of chemical workers was 82.5 in 1935—in 1936 it had fallen to 81.7 pfennigs.

Building workers' wages were 84.7 pfennigs per hour in 1935, and by 1936 they had fallen to 83.6. Again, take the paper-making industry: skilled workers' wages dropped from 71.2 in 1935 to 70.7 in 1936, and unskilled workers' wages from 59.6 to 57.6—a difference of two pfennigs per hour or a shilling a week, a very nasty drop for people earning what was already less than a subsistence wage.⁵

WHAT ABOUT HOURS?

In the matter of hours we again see a disparity between the arms industry and other fields. The German Statistical Research Institute—the Nazis' own official institute, from whom we take the figures in these pages—gives the daily average for 1935 as 7½ hours per day.⁶ BUT—and a big “but”—that average is made by adding up all the hours worked in all industries and then dividing it by the number of workers. And it certainly does sound swell until you begin to take it apart. And then we see that in the arms industry, people are working eight, nine or even ten hours per day—while in the industries producing “consumption goods” (food, drink, clothing, smoking, furniture, etc.—the things we need to make life human) they are working only five or six hours. Only five or six hours—yet there are millions of Germans who badly need food and clothing. Yet they work up to ten hours per day on arms—something wrong somewhere!

Short time is on the increase in many industries in Germany. This, of course, affects the workers' earnings, because, while short time (five or six hours per day, four or five days per week) is spreading *there is no corresponding increase in hourly wages*, and thus the workers in a number of industries are earning less and less money. But the Nazis boast their wages PER HOUR are unaltered, and thus, until you look into it, everything in Naziland is lovely.

Now just a few more figures on wages, and you will realise just what the fascists have done to the incomes of these men and women of the German working class. We know that figures are “dry,” but sometimes they mean all the difference between existence and starvation. We ask you to bear with us and glance over these because they are very important, and they're official—the Nazis can't deny them.

They are the figures of state insurance, and thus very

difficult to "cook." They show the percentages of the population earning various rates of wages in 1929 (pre-fascist) and 1935 (under Hitler). You will note that there has been a considerable drift from the higher-wages section into those where lower wages are earned. It's reckoned in weekly wages.⁷

Weekly Wages.		1929	1935	Of population employed.
Up to 6 marks	...	3.5%	4.0%	
Between 6 and 12 marks	...	12.3%	21.4%	" " "
" 12 " 18	"	16.5%	16.1%	" " "
" 18 " 24	"	13.0%	13.6%	" " "
" 24 " 30	"	8.8%	11.4%	" " "
" 30 " 36	"	8.1%	10.7%	" " "
Over 36 marks	...	37.8%	22.8%	" " "

NOTE.—Although one mark is nominally worth rs. 8d. its purchasing power is approximately 1s.

This table shows that, in the period from 1929 to 1935 (three years pre-fascist and three years of fascist rule), the percentage of the German people receiving HIGH WAGES HAS DECREASED, and the percentage receiving LOWER WAGES has INCREASED. For instance, in 1929, 37.8 of the population earned above 36 marks per week. In 1935, however, only 22.8 per cent. were earning wages above that figure—a reduction of about 40 per cent. On the other hand, while, in 1929 only 12.3 per cent. of the German workers earned the extremely low wage of from six to 12 marks per week, now, under the fascists, 21.4 per cent. are in receipt of this miserly income, an increase of nearly 75 per cent.

The published accounts of payments (obligatory contributions) made to the Labour Front, which are graded according to income, show that 3,700,000 German workers now earn LESS THAN FORTY MARKS PER MONTH—less than a pound a week. In fact, they are earning less while working than they would have received in unemployed benefit in 1932, before the fascists came to power and severely slashed the unemployment assistance rates.

DEDUCTIONS—WHETHER YOU LIKE IT OR NOT

Official figures for the building industry show that the percentage of total costs expended in wages, between 1932 and 1935, has decreased from 76.4 per cent. to 69.5 per cent. as compared with 1928-30—equivalent to a 30.5 per cent. reduction in wages.⁸ And this without counting the various obligatory deductions made from the building workers' wages.

This matter of compulsory deductions is a sore point with the German workers—it is one of the methods by which the fascists reduce wages without the actual reduction appearing in the official figures.

Here is a list of the *compulsory deductions* from German workers' wages—deducted at source.⁹ We give percentages because the amounts are not fixed but are on a sliding scale according to wages received.

Compulsory contributions to insurance, church taxes, rates, etc.	...	...	...	14.2 per cent.
Payments to Labour Front and Nazi Public Assistance	...	...	...	1.9 " "
Payments to Party funds, air defences, etc.	...	...	...	1.6 " "
Deductions for newspapers, radio in factory, Nazi Party journals, etc.	...	...	...	3.3 " "
Payments to various state organisations: Sports Clubs, Ex-Service Men, etc.	...	...	...	1.0 " "
Payments towards sundry other purposes: Nazi Party celebrations, etc.	...	...	...	1.3 " "
Total				23.3 per cent.

We see that 23 per cent. and a fraction is deducted from the wages of the German workers—almost a quarter. Now these figures do not appear in the Nazi official wage statistics—they give the amounts of wages BEFORE the deductions are made.

The above figures were given officially at the last meeting of the treasury officials of the Labour Front. And they do NOT include the further deductions which are made each year for "Winter Help."

Some readers of this pamphlet may wonder, for a moment, that workers can be compelled to pay contributions towards objects with which they have no agreement whatever, such as, for instance, the deductions made for newspapers. A worker who is no Nazi must yet part with cash to keep a Nazi paper going. Incidentally, this helps us to understand how the Nazi Press keeps its "marvellous circulation." But we must remember what we have learnt in the previous pages—the workers have no union, no protection, the employer is lord.

This is how they make the workers pay for newspapers they don't want and probably don't read. A certain Nazi paper, the *Arbeitsmann*, official organ of the "Labour Service," had a circulation of only 65,000 copies up to the spring of 1936.

This did not leave enough profit for the officials who ran it or for the Nazi treasury. Therefore, a "campaign" was launched and the number of regular subscribers rapidly rose to 240,000. The Labour Service workers were compelled to subscribe to the paper, under threats of punishment, curtailment of home leave, punishment drill, and so on. Many were not permitted to go to their homes for the Whitsun holidays until they had signed up for a six months' sub. amounting to 1s. per month.

This is a taste of Nazi tactics. How would the average trade unionist like it if the price of the *Blackshirt* was taken out of his wages, without a by-your-leave, each week, and instead of the money he was handed the paper? But that is what the workers get if they allow the fascists to get into the saddle.

A POVERTY BUDGET

We have already remarked, in these pages, that REAL wages must be reckoned in accordance with what they will buy, with prices. If prices rise, and wages are stationary, it is the same thing as a wage-cut. Let us take a look at the cost of living in Germany.

According to the German government statistical department (*Statistisches Reichsamt*) the cost of living in Germany has risen by 5½ per cent. between June 1933 and May 1936. But really it has risen higher, as concerns the workers, for this is an *average* figure and includes certain luxury products which workers could never buy. For instance, food has risen EIGHT per cent., and clothing TWELVE per cent.

And how did the German official department arrive at its figures? It drew up what it considered to be the average necessities of a family of five people. A glance at their estimate will reveal the terrible poverty of the German workers.¹⁰ For this government department calculates that this average family of five live in two rooms and a kitchen, and allows them two pounds of butter and two pounds of margarine per month (they'd be lucky to get it during the present scarcity!). Clothing purchases for the whole family are set at one shirt, one vest and a half (three in two months), one pair of men's pants, and five pairs of socks or stockings. Allowance is made only for FOUR shaves per month for father! Let's hope one of the boys hasn't started growing whiskers yet. And, for postage, they are allowed only two postcards and one letter per month. Not per week—all the above items are the MONTHLY allowance.

And there is no provision for a new suit for Father or a dress a hat for Mother or shoes for the kiddies.

The *Arbeiter Correspondenz*, October 1936,¹¹ an official German paper, admits the rise in food costs in the following words: "The general price level maintained up to the present has now during the last few months taken an upward course. . . . From the greengrocer to the boarding-house proprietress, from the butcher to the milliner, all say they must charge more."

The reason for these high prices? Germany is making more guns and less clothes; she is importing more raw material for war industry and less food. And the cost has to be covered for the maintenance of a huge army of fascist officials. Another reason is the high tariff on imported foodstuffs.

The German economic review *Wirtschaft und Statistik*¹² ("Economics and Statistics") admits that the consumption of meat is falling lower and lower. Here are the figures of the average amount of meat consumed per person in Germany PER MONTH: In 1934, nearly nine pounds per head; in 1935, eight pounds per head; and, in 1936, only FIVE pounds per person. Five pounds of meat per month per person—the average housewife will realise what this means. As we may see, the amount has been reduced to almost one half under fascist rule. But Goering—we venture to think—eats more than five pounds per month.

Just now Germany is suffering from a famine in fats, as has been reported in the British press. Even if a housewife can afford the price of a quarter-pound of butter—about twice as dear as in England—she may have to wait in line for hours outside a shop to obtain it. The reason? Butter used to be imported from Denmark. Now the fascists are using that money to import materials for making munitions. Thus butter becomes scarce and the price rises. And the rationing system introduced on New Year's Day 1937 is the most recent measure imposed by the Nazis.

Naturally, the shortage of fats, rising food prices and the decline in real wages and in housing must adversely affect the health of the nation. Let British working-class mothers note how the fascist rule has affected the health of the children of Germany. Here follow official figures, taken from the "German Statistical Yearbook" of 1935, with regard to the prevalence of scarlet fever and diphtheria among the children of Germany.

	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria
1932 (Hitler came to power	55,923	65,414
1933 January 1933) ...	79,830	77,340
1934	110,706	113,396

Furthermore, mortality from the above complaints had risen 50 per cent. in the three years quoted, and from measles 77.4 per cent.

Only recently that great Nazi leader—second only to Hitler—double-chinned, fat-bellied General Goering, in a speech told the Germans to use more jam instead of butter. Apple-and-plum is the jam in question, and those who served in the British army during the war will remember how they detested that “luxury.” But it is not recommended to the Germans as a luxury. They are not supposed to spread it over butter or even margarine, but to use it *INSTEAD* of butter or “marge.”

As one German working man remarked to another, when a well-fed Nazi Party official rode by in his luxury car, “They get all the plums, and all we get is plum-and-apple!”

Food and clothing—production in both is declining. Even General Goering’s vast wardrobe of uniforms—one for every hour of the day—cannot keep the clothing industry from declining. And how about the provision of houses and flats for the people, under fascist rule? Let us look at the figures issued by Dr. Vögler, official head of the Building Industry in Germany. First, comparing 1935 with 1928, he finds that only 87 per cent. as much building work is now taking place, and only 73 per cent. as much allotted to building. Building in general, then, has declined. But let us look further, as to *WHAT KIND* of building is being done now, as compared with the earlier year.

Dr. Vögler¹³ shows that two classes of building have declined—housing and industrial building (new factories, etc.); while one class has gone up—“public works.” In 1928, 36 per cent. of all building work was for housing—in 1935, only 17 per cent., less than half as much. Fascism means slums and overcrowding! Industrial building work—building and extending factories, textile mills, etc.—in 1928 represented 33 per cent. of all building—in 1935 it was only 15 per cent., again less than half. Fascism means industrial decline. But “public works” leapt from 31 per cent. in 1928 to 68 per cent. in 1935. These “public works” are *NOT* schools, hospitals and libraries—it’s

easier to burn books than build libraries—but barracks, aerodromes and fortifications. Fascism means, not homes for workers to live in, but places for them to fight and die in.

But why worry? Even if the German worker has to go around in a shoddy suit of the year before last, and can only have one shave a week, and his wife must tramp, in thin broken shoes, for miles to buy a quarter-pound of margarine—what matter? Let them rejoice. For in two branches of manufacturing there is greatly increased activity. The production of private motor cars and champagne has increased enormously since the fascists came to power and installed their thousands of fat, easy-living officials in cushy jobs—for which the workers have to pay. Look at the figures.

In 1934, 300,000 motor cars were produced. In 1935, 500,000. And champagne? In 1932, just before the Nazis came in, only 5,000,000 bottles were produced. But in 1935, it was 13,000,000 bottles. So there’s nothing to worry about in Germany! Incidentally, the fascists have repealed the tax on motor cars and champagne.¹⁴ And after June 30th, 1934, Hitler revealed that in the Storm Troopers’ headquarters in Berlin, about £2,000 was spent every month for champagne. So everything is lovely—for the German employers and their servants, the Nazi Party officials.¹⁵

UNEMPLOYMENT

But you should just hear the British Blackshirts on the street corner boasting of how the German fascists have “reduced” unemployment! This is the supreme achievement of fascism, according to them.

It is strange, therefore, if they have put so many more people to work, that—as we have seen from official figures—wages have gone down, fewer houses are being built, and conditions have worsened generally. Plenty of employment, surely, should mean prosperity?

As a matter of fact, there has been some improvement in German employment—although nothing like as much as the Nazis claim. But note this well: That improvement is not *BECAUSE* of Nazi rule—unemployment had begun to decrease *BEFORE* the Nazis came in, owing to certain economic causes, and would have continued—*PROBABLY AT A GREATER RATE*—had they not come to power.

The world-wide trade depression was already beginning to lift before the Nazis came to power. Between August and December 1932 (under the Republic), 121,000 more people found work. Then Hitler came to power. The process continued and he grabbed the credit.

But the main present cause of re-employment is the tremendous expansion of the Nazi armaments industry. Thousands more men have been put to work making guns—but thousands have been put on part-time, instead of full-time, making other goods. The Nazis do not mention this.

Another method of "solving" unemployment, under the Nazis, is the organisation of the "land-helpers."¹⁶ There are some 115,000 of these young men and women, aged from 16 to 25, city-bred, who have been bound by the State in contract to farmers to work for them for their bed and board and a couple of pence in pocket money. The contracts last six months. No young worker—there are 90,000 men and 25,000 girls—can choose the part of the country to which he or she is sent. Conditions on some farms are frightful. And it is virtually slave labour, for, if one of them "breaks his contract" and runs away he forfeits his right to unemployment benefit. Many working-class mothers are terrified when their daughters are sent away to these farms because of the dangers to morals, known to exist there.

In May 1935 COMPULSORY LABOUR for both sexes was introduced. At this date it was estimated that between 200,000 and 250,000 young people had registered for "Voluntary Labour Service" in 1933 and 1934. Once they had them on their register, the Nazis passed this law transforming "voluntary labour"—meaning that applicants were forced only by hunger and social pressure to register—into compulsory labour which now forms part of military service. Since then they have published no figures.

The great increase in the army itself allows for several hundred thousand more men coming off the unemployment register, thus enabling the fascists to point to their magnificent achievement in "reducing unemployment." And, we must remember, there are thousands of workers in the punishment camps because they ventured to be loyal to their trade unions or political parties. The withdrawing of young people under 25 and of women—"woman's place is in the kitchen!"—has also had the effect of freeing the unemployment register of

thousands of names—although what has become of all these unfortunate people is a matter of conjecture. For many of the women there were no kitchens to go into.

THE MISSING MILLIONS

But, in considering fascist unemployment statistics, we find that there is a curious disagreement between the figures for RE-EMPLOYMENT and those for UNEMPLOYMENT.¹⁷ In 1933 there were 6,100,000 unemployed (official figures). In 1935, the fascists state, there were 1,400,000 re-employed. Yet the fascists place the unemployment figure now at only 1,700,000. If we add the re-employed (1,400,000) to the official figure of unemployed (1,700,000) we have a total of only 3,100,000. Subtract that from the 1933 6,100,000 unemployed and we have 3,000,000. WHAT HAS BECOME OF THEM?

Some have been called to the colours, under the new conscription act, but the figures are not published. Others are working on munitions, but these figures are also kept dark. There is the compulsory Labour Service, under which the workers are semi-militarised, and the fact that all workers under 25, as well as married women in domestic employment, have been deprived of the right to unemployment relief. And the rest, for there must still be a considerable number not accounted for in the above categories? They have not found work. THEY ARE ONLY OFF THE REGISTER. They are living as best they can—on their families and friends, on charity or even crime. But—they are off the register, thus enabling the fascists to claim their big reduction in unemployment.

This consideration is supported by the fact that the fascists have not only substantially reduced the rates of unemployment relief and have deprived thousands of the right to that relief, but they have also made it much more difficult to secure relief and remain on the register. The worker's contribution is heavy, amounting to 3 per cent. of his full wages—nearly 1s. 3d. per week, for instance, for a man earning £2 per week. This is twice what it was in 1928, and the amount of time which must elapse after loss of employment has been lengthened—it is now from six to twenty-one days, according to circumstances. The Nazis are working in a direction exactly contrary to what is happening in Britain, where agricultural workers are now

being admitted to unemployment relief. Not that we consider our own unemployment relief scheme as by any means perfect! But the fascists in Germany have excluded agricultural workers, as well as workers in forestry and fisheries, formerly eligible for relief. By all these means they have manipulated their register to make it appear that they have begun to "solve" the problem of unemployment.

And, incidentally, speaking of Nazi unemployment and other figures: frequently you will hear British fascists quoting figures, referring to Germany or Italy, of the International Labour Office of the League of Nations, as though these figures were arrived at by an independent agency. They do not tell you that the International Labour Office in Geneva conducts no independent investigations, in order to arrive at statistics of its own. It merely ACCEPTS THE FIGURES SUPPLIED IT BY THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENTS, INCLUDING THE FASCIST GOVERNMENTS. It has no machinery for testing them, and thus has to accept them and hope for the best. Thus, I.L.O. figures, regarding Germany, are the German Nazi government's own figures, with regard to wages, hours, unemployment, etc.

One last little example of how the Nazis "solve" unemployment. Last September (1936), 300 men on public assistance in the town of Breslau were ordered suddenly on a Friday to report at the railway station on the following Monday morning. They were not told where they were being sent, nor for how long. They were taken to Koenigsberg, in East Prussia, and were not allowed to write to their families for a fortnight. They were not permitted to mention the war-work upon which they were engaged. They were segregated in a camp, their letters were all censored, they worked under military discipline and received nothing beyond bed and board for full-time work. Such cases occur frequently.

BUT THE FIGHT GOES ON

We must not assume, however, that the Nazis have been successful in breaking the spirit of the German workers. Even under the present tyranny, there are amazing examples of tenacity and devotion by those workers who persist in carrying on a struggle against their oppressors. There is in Germany what is called the "underground movement," the maintenance

in secret of working-class party organisations, and even trade union bodies. Handbills are thrust under the doors of working-class dwellings, overnight placards—secretly printed—are pasted on the walls, and appeals are chalked on walls.

Here and there, small strikes have taken place in factories and other concerns, despite the fact that they are prohibited by fascist law. And collections have been made among the German workers—under conditions of great danger and difficulty—for medical aid and food for the Spanish loyalist forces and the women and children of Spain. A working-class movement such as that in Germany—which has produced men like André, who was recently executed, the writer, Ludwig Renn, and the indomitable Thaelmann and Mierendorff, among others, who have been in prison, without trial, for years—can never finally be defeated, although this movement has received a severe set-back. But the struggle against fascism in Germany goes on. We can help that struggle by fighting fascism here in Britain.

We have taken Germany as our example in this pamphlet because in that country there was a great trade union movement, similar to our own; and also because British fascism models itself, more and more, on the German example. British fascists adopted uniforms similar to those of the German fascists are adopting uniforms similar to those of the German hooligan Black Guards who so brutally beat and tortured working people. They have added to the name of their organisation—the British Union of Fascists—the additional title of National-Socialist Party, which is the name of the German fascists' party; and they are following the example of the German fascists in trying to rouse resentment against the Jews. In order to protect the capitalist system and big business, they tell the unemployed, and others whose lot is unhappy, that the Jews are responsible. In this way, they seek to divert their attention from the true facts, just as did Hitler and his followers.

But, with minor differences, what we have described stands also for conditions in Italy, and in certain other countries where fascism, if not yet in complete ascendance, has considerable power. It is to establish a similar tyranny that the Spanish "Nationalists," under General Franco, are seeking to overthrow the Spanish Government, which recognises the right of the workers to organise in trade unions and to endeavour to improve their conditions.

And, wherever fascism makes its appearance, rearmament proceeds at a feverish rate, and the country is being fast driven on to war. The fascists cannot remedy poverty at home—they cannot find a way out of the terrible condition in which the people are living. So their energies are turned OUTWARD, away from home, towards war and conquest. Fascism leads directly to war. The suppression of the trade union movement in any country aids the war-makers, because the international trade union movement can be a tremendous factor in the prevention of war, and the suppression of trade unions in any one country means the loss of a vital link in the chain of the anti-war forces of labour.

It is therefore of the utmost importance that every British trade unionist should realise just what fascism means to him. It means the death of trade unionism in Britain, the worsening of working conditions, and the restriction of the freedom of the workers. It means that all the years of effort and self-sacrifice which have been devoted to building up our trade union movement will be made fruitless by the plotting of people who—whether they be knaves or well-meaning dupes—are merely the tools of those great interests who have always desired the destruction of trade unionism—high finance and capital.

The British fascists—in their speeches and newspapers—declare that they are on the side of the working people. Hitler and the German fascists said the same thing. The British fascists talk about “100 per cent. trade unionism,” but their brand of trade unionism is the money-grabbing fake of the German Labour Front. The Italian and the German fascists all talked about being friends of trade unionism—before they came to power. Now there isn't a trade union left in either of those countries.

The British fascists are compelled sometimes to give their talks and writings a faint appearance of sympathy with the working man, because otherwise they would get no support at all. But their real feeling towards organised labour is evident in the recent articles written in their journal, rankly abusing and libelling officials of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, for which they were ordered to pay considerable damages. The fascists will stop at no mean tactics to secure followers; they will even use the term “Socialist” to fool the workers into supporting them. Hitler and his men did that when they called themselves “National-Socialists”—and thousands of Germans

now miserably realise just what that was worth. Nothing of a Socialist nature has been attempted in Italy or Germany—the capitalists and banks there are stronger than ever before, and they heartily support the fascists.

The British Union of Fascists is not the only danger. The National Government also desires to restrict the power and influence of the trade unions. A whole series of legislative measures have been passed by that government which weaken the trade unions and restrict their freedom of action. It would be folly to prepare against the British fascists and to overlook forces behind the National Government.

TIME TO ACT IS NOW

In Great Britain there are people who sneer or joke at the menace of fascism at home. It is true the fascists are not strong here at present. But, unless we put our fellow-workers, our friends and families, on their guard, the fascists might increase in strength. The time to fight this evil is NOW—we must not wait until it is too late, as did the German trade unions.

The German working class was strong enough to put an end to fascism, had it only acted in time. Even as early as March 1920, the German fascist-monarchists tried to overthrow the Republic by means of an armed rising, and the prompt united action of the workers defeated that attempt.

That the German trade unions acted tardily in opposition to fascism is now an accepted fact. In a trade union anti-fascist publication entitled *Fascism*, published by the International Transport Workers' Federation—to which the great transport workers' unions of Britain and other countries are affiliated—a writer states as follows:

“Between trade unionism and National-Socialism (fascism) no compromise is possible; under National-Socialist dictatorship there is no room for free workers' organisations. To-day, after three years of fascism in Germany, there is no more difference of opinion on this point, but when in 1932 the (German) unions had to decide whether or not to engage in open struggle for their existence, they hesitated and yielded, in the hope that some miracle would save them. Their yielding proved fatal.”

Now we in Britain do not have to wait as long as that, until the danger has grown so big. WE CAN BEGIN RIGHT NOW TO COMBAT FASCISM. The first step is EDUCATION—we must tell the truth about fascism at every opportunity: at our branch meetings, on the job, in the pub or on our way to the football game—wherever we come together with other workers. We can see that others secure copies of this pamphlet, that our branch or Co-op. Guild places an order for it.

“WE MUST NOT SLEEP”

Besides this, our best defence against fascism is to STRENGTHEN OUR OWN ORGANISATION. Let us work towards an increased membership for our trade unions, the Labour Party, the Co-operatives, and all working-class organisations; and, above all, everywhere within these organisations let us preach vigilance, VIGILANCE, VIGILANCE. We must be vigilant, for the conspirators would destroy all that we have built up, and make of our country, a barracks, a prison and a shambles.

We can defeat fascism in Britain, if we are determined and if we spread the facts. And if we stand unitedly together, whatever our respective opinions or organisations, in this fight.

YOU who have read this pamphlet—trade unionist, co-operator, or wife, son or daughter of trade unionist or co-operator—it is YOUR job to help this fight. If you look around you, you will easily find other workers who are carrying on the anti-fascist agitation. JOIN IN WITH THEM. HELP THEM. DO YOUR BIT.

We must not sleep, we who believe in liberty, for the jackals may creep upon us unawares. We must not see England, Scotland, Wales—countries which we love, although conditions are by no means perfect within them—turned into grim lands where those who labour must move at the crack of the whip, wielded by the fascist agents of the exploiters of labour.

We who are British love to speak of our liberties. Those liberties are threatened. Let us hasten to defend them, here and now. If we do this we shall be able to banish the evil plague which has already fastened upon the German and Italian people, and make our country a country really of freedom, where the people may work out their own salvation, and control their own destinies.

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